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SUBJECT: RECRUITING TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMATS FOR FIELD  
TOURS IN DARFUR

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BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT  
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¶1. (U) This cable is intended to advertise and recruit individuals to serve four-six month TDY tours in Darfur in support of the Embassy Political Section and Washington's foreign policy objectives in Sudan. S/CRS personnel, with stop-gap support from Embassy political officers, have manned Post's Darfur presence for roughly one year, but expect to wind down full-time support by mid- to late-summer. The Department is seeking to identify qualified personnel so that Post can minimize any staffing gaps in Darfur, which remains a top U.S. foreign policy priority and a prime transformational diplomacy opportunity.

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THE PITCH  
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¶2. (U) There are few higher U.S. foreign policy priorities than alleviating the mass displacements and human suffering in Darfur and pursuing peace in the conflict-ridden region. Darfur presents a unique and challenging political, security, social and functional environment that is well outside the traditional scope of most Embassy operations. Daily activities in the field may range from gathering information about the latest ceasefire violations, to accompanying peacekeeping patrols, to coordinating high-level visits, to interacting with UN field staff, civil society, Sudanese officials and military figures. As one of only a few USG officials on the ground and likely the only State Department representative, the opportunity to serve in Darfur requires an ability to work in an ambiguous, fast-paced environment where collaboration, flexibility, initiative and creativity are essential attributes. The Secretary cited the importance of this work, stating that in Darfur "several members of our team moved in fast and light. They acquired a space to call their headquarters. And they have been working for the past few months to help transform the conditions on the ground, with everyone from Sudanese rebel groups, to African Union peacekeepers, to international aid workers." To serve as a field officer in Darfur is to be at the vanguard of transformational diplomacy, where policy is put into practice and possibilities abound to act as an agent of change in support of peace.

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BACKGROUND

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¶3. (U) Shortly after the May 2006 signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), a small team from the Active Response Corps (ARC) of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) deployed to Darfur to assist Embassy Khartoum in creating a forward USG presence and provide ground-level reporting. The team was also charged with establishing and operationalizing DPA Implementation Offices, also known as Peace Secretariats, which serve as platforms to expand awareness of the peace process, enhance African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) political and outreach capacity, provide needed communications and office capabilities to DPA signatories, and serve as practical venues for implementation coordination and civil society activities. The ARC team quickly established field operations in North Darfur state capital El Fasher, where both AMIS and the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) have central headquarters.

¶4. (U) Over several months, ARC members oversaw the refurbishment of two residences that now have full and redundant communications capabilities and serve as a base of operations in the field. With dedicated support from both Embassy Khartoum and Washington, the ARC team acquired field staff, including interpreters and drivers, procured vehicles, established operating and reporting procedures, and laid the foundation for a self-sustained and long-term presence in Darfur. Field officers also cultivated a broad network of contacts in the international, civil society, local and humanitarian communities. In September 2006, ARC members - in close collaboration with USAID - opened the Peace Secretariat in El Fasher. Led by the African Union (AU) and supported behind the scenes by Embassy field officers, this facility continues to evolve as one of the hubs for peace process-related activities in Darfur. The

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U.S. is currently the only country maintaining a permanent diplomatic presence in Darfur, though other countries, including Canada, the UK and the Netherlands, have taken note of the USG's leadership in the field and are considering similar means of enhancing their own ground-level visibility.

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UNCONVENTIONAL DIPLOMATIC OPERATIONS AND DUTIES  
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¶5. (U) The scope of responsibilities and duties for a Darfur field officer continues to evolve as the political, security, social and humanitarian dynamics on the ground change. At a minimum, however, the officer may be expected to fill both managerial and substantive roles. On the management side, the officer will oversee a foreign service national staff that includes drivers, interpreters/assistants, a local guard force, an administrative assistant, and cleaners. He/she will also be ultimately responsible for the smooth functioning of logistic, financial and administrative requirements related to Darfur field operations, cooperating closely with all Embassy staff sections and the U.S. contracting officer technical representative (COTR), who is also based in El Fasher.

¶6. (U) On substance, the field officer(s) are responsible for providing substantive reporting to Embassy and Washington on critical political, security, economic, social and humanitarian matters. Moreover, officers must manage relationships with AMIS, provide advisory support to the AU political affairs section in El Fasher, continue to publicize and develop the role and effective functioning of the Peace Secretariat, and maintain contact with both DPA signatory and non-signatory representatives. As the peace process morphs, the field officer will be responsible for identifying areas where the USG may play a constructive

role, whether that is supporting ongoing multilateral efforts to bridge differences between the GoS and non-signatory groups or unilateral actions, such as funding grassroots reconciliation efforts. As needed, the officer may serve as the U.S. representative on the AMIS Ceasefire Commission (CFC) or other bodies created under the DPA. He/she should continue to develop relationships with senior UN, NGO, civil society and government officials throughout Darfur and must continue to facilitate and report on coordination between the AU, UN and other stakeholders in DPA implementation or peace process-related activities. As plans for the introduction of a UN Light and Heavy Support Package and, ultimately, a hybrid force move forward, the field officer shall report on progress, identify capacity gaps and suggest measures that the U.S. may take to expedite these processes. The field officer will also be expected to coordinate all manner of visits - ranging from Embassy officials to Congressional delegations - to Darfur. Periodically, he/she may travel to other parts of Darfur to monitor specific issues or respond to Embassy taskings, and shall return to Khartoum every two-three weeks to read classified traffic and synchronize policy and program efforts between the field and capital.

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LIFE IN THE FIELD  
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¶7. (U) A TDY tour in Darfur is a transformational diplomatic experience. While living and working conditions have improved significantly since the first ARC members arrived in June 2006, life in the field is dramatically different than serving in the capital. The two USG residences in El Fasher provide a functional base of operations for field officers to live and conduct business. Unlike in Afghanistan or Iraq, where there are significant USG logistical footprints, Darfur field officers must be prepared to improvise and fend for themselves, tapping into locally available resources. Internet connectivity is generally reliable and there are redundant forms of phone communication (local cell network and satellite). Still, power outages, extreme climatic conditions, temperamental water supply, government-imposed curfews, logistical challenges, scant social outlets, limited local availability of goods and services, and fluctuating security conditions are just a few of the factors that shape life in the field.

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WHAT IT TAKES - RECRUITING PARAMETERS  
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¶8. (U) Candidates for TDY tours in Darfur must, above all, be flexible self-starters capable of working in ambiguous and fluid conflict-affected environments. Qualified Civil Servants and Foreign Service Officers are eligible. Individuals who are available for deployment as early as mid-March are encouraged to apply. Because of the heavy interaction with AMIS, rebel movements and Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), candidates with a military/security background or significant political-military reporting experience are desired. Previous experience working in austere environments or conflict zones, such as Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Iraq or Afghanistan, and a solid understanding of international and humanitarian organizations' field activities are also important qualifications. Candidates are not required to speak Arabic, though this is an advantage. Potential field officers must have a Class I medical clearance; strong analytical, interpersonal, written and oral communication, organizational and managerial skills are essential. Candidates should be willing to work long hours in less than ideal conditions with little or no direct supervision.

Continuity is prized in the field and candidates willing to serve six month tours (or more) will be highly considered. Ties, loafers and formal office attire can be left at home.

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BENNIES  
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¶9. (U) The greatest benefit in volunteering to serve as a Darfur field officer is the satisfaction of contributing to one of the USG's highest foreign policy priorities. This exciting field position allows expansive room for initiative and creativity and provides a unique transformational diplomatic experience that few others in the State Department may gain. Beyond personal and professional enrichment, a field officer on a four-six month TDY will receive a one-week regional R&R at mid tour. Field officers are entitled also to 25 percent Post differential (after 42 days on the ground) and 25 percent danger pay (immediately). Personnel serving in Darfur will be expected to return to Khartoum periodically for a hot shower and decent meal.

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HOW TO APPLY  
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¶10. (U) Post is seeking to backfill positions in the field within the May/June timeframe at the latest. Applications should consist of a detailed resume and cover letter explaining the candidate's interest and relevant functional or regional experience. Candidates should obtain at least provisional agreement beforehand from their home offices or duty stations that, if selected, they will be able to deploy to Darfur for four-six months as soon as May/June. Complete applications should be sent as soon as possible via email to AF/SPG Deputy Director Jason Small, who, in conjunction with Embassy Khartoum, will select suitable candidates. As we expect these positions in Darfur to continue, candidates who are not selected for the period beginning in May may be considered for tours at a later time.

¶11. (U) Interested candidates should contact Jason Small in AF/SPG. Eythan Sontag in S/CRS can reply to specific questions on substantive field issues and provide first-hand insights into this field assignment.

¶12. (U) Minimize Considered.  
RICE